

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release PMs April 15, 1971

Carroll 343-5634

MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION COMMISSION APPROVES ADDITION TO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE IN COLORADO

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission has approved purchase of an additional 891 acres for Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge in Colorado, Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton announced today. It now has 9,550 acres.

Arapaho, which ultimately will consist of nearly 30,000 acres, lies along the Illinois River in North Park. It is a major waterfowl area in the intermountain region, although not so productive for birds as it was in the late 19th century, before settlement started and man began to manage the land for hay crops. When the refuge development is completed, Arapaho is expected to become the intermountain region's most important waterfowl production area, as it was in the 1880's. Plans for developing the refuge also call for a sport fishery.

The primary nesting species in this area is the mallard, with lesser numbers of gadwall, cinnamon teal and shoveler. This also is one of the few places in Colorado for nesting canvasback, scaup, red-head and ruddy ducks.

The Commission passes on proposed land acquisitions from funds collected through the sale of duck stamps. Its members are Secretary Morton (chairman), Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin, Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, Senator Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma, Senator Lee Metcalf of Montana, Representative Silvio Conte of Massachusetts, and Representative John Dingell of Michigan.

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